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The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. XXV. JUNE, 1916 No. 1

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.
MONTHLY, EXCEPT AUGUST: 50 cents a year.
Single copy, 5 cents.

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second class mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

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TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW.

High hopes that burned like stars sublime
Go down i' the heavens of Freedom;
And true hearts perish in the time
We bitterliest need 'em!
But never sit down and say
There's nothing left but sorrow:
We walk the wilderness to-day—
The Promised Land to-morrow.

Our birds of song are silent now—
There are no flowers blooming;
Yet life beats in the frozen bough,
And Freedom's spring is coming!
And Freedom's tide comes up alway,
Though we may strand in sorrow;
And our good bark, aground to-day,
Shall float again to-morrow.

Through all the long dark night of years
The people's cry ascendeth,
The earth is wet with blood and tears,
But our meek sufferance endeth!
The few shall not forever sway,
The many toil in sorrow:
The powers of hell are strong to-day,
But Christ shall rise to-morrow.

Though hearts brood o'er the past, our eyes
With smiling future glisten!
For lo! our day bursts up the skies;
Lean out your souls and listen!
The world rolls Freedom's radiant way,
And ripens with her sorrow;
Deep hearts! who bear the cross to-day,
Shall wear the crown to-morrow.

O youth! flame earnest, still aspire
With energies immortal!
To many a heaven of desire,
Our yearning eyes a portal!
And though age wearies by the way,
And hearts break on the furrow,
We'll sow the golden grain to-day—
The harvest comes to-morrow.

Build up heroic lives, and all
Be like a sheathen sabre,
Ready to flash out at God's call,
Oh, chivalry of labor!
Triumph and Toil are twins, and aye
Joy suns the cloud of sorrow;
And 'tis the martyrdom to-day
Brings victory to-morrow.

—*Gerald Massey.*

ENDURING TO THE END.

"*But he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved.*"—MATT. xxiv. 13.

"I am not alone, for the Father is with me." That was said when Jesus was sure that every friend he had on earth would forsake him in the hour of his uttermost trial; and a glorious triumph over that which men call Fate is in the words! Nor are they tainted with one complaint that he was forsaken of his friends, nor with one lessening of his love for them. Though they were faithless, weak, even betraying, he loved them to the end.

This was the endurance of the text; and this was his salvation—the preservation of a divine character—Love's conquest of all things.

This is to be our struggle in every case; the subduing of complaint, of irritable words, of disturbing act, in order that those around us may be happier; the conquering of anger at our circumstances, of dull sadness which prevents us from living for others; the settled resolution to overcome the feeling that God has not been just to us; the determination not to isolate ourselves from mankind—in one word, to gain, hold fast, and secure love to God and love to man within and without,

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so that after long endurance we cease to think of ourselves at all; or, if pain drives us to think of ourselves, as it often will, to use that self thought, and all it tells us, to enable us to better and console others who are afflicted in the same way as ourselves.

That is endurance to the end, and it is salvation. Out of it finally flows freedom—freedom from self-thinking, self-brooding; and with that freedom there is mixed a soft and gracious joy. For into such a heart God pours himself; and Nature, God's vicegerent, ministers to it also, and sends a thousand sweet messages from waving tree, and floating cloud, and rippling water, to restore the wounds of the heart; and man, God's child, enchanted with the tender beauty of love in such a life, comes daily to bring its gratitude, its joy and love and worship to so lovely a thing, so that the heart of the sufferer rejoices, the burden of the weary world is lifted off, and victory over ills of life is won. This is salvation indeed, and it comes in the end to such endurance.

Lastly there are two things which strike us at once on reading this phrase of Christ's, and which bear on all I have been saying. The first is, that the religion which addresses consolation so stern as this to human life is a religion fitted to make men heroic. It offers to its followers a severe life, and it bids them work it out to the end. And such an aspect did life present to the Christians of the earlier church, that if they were to have any comfort it must be heroic comfort. For all their days were passed in active battle, in stern endurance. These words, then, which accept the struggle, and are knit in resolution to fulfil it, are but the repetition of those other words of Christ—"In this world ye shall have tribulation." To be told the full truth, to have nothing hidden, nothing softened, no rose water sprinkled on pain, to be certain that God would not remove hardness from the path, or difficulty from the strife, but that life were severe and stern—incessant hewing through the wood against a thousand obstacles; that all must be gone through with it to the very end—that was the iron comfort which the follower of Christ received for this life; and the main thing to be said about it is—that it was such as only an heroic temper could endure to bear, that it was likely to create in the strong and weak alike, "one equal temper of heroic hearts—to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

It was that temper that it did create. Men knew what was before them, and the call, the certainty of suffering and battle,—so well did Jesus understand mankind, so much did he believe in the heroic in the human heart,—instead of discouraging, encouraged men to join his standard. It is not true to say that Christ's religion is unmanly. It breeds heroes, men and women who are quiet, who make no show, but who, for love of their Master and their Father, day by day, fight the good fight, and endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

And, secondly, there is the reward of the strife. In the long bitterness of this stern battle is there no brightness? Are men who follow Jesus left without something more than this spirit-stirring call?

There are those who say that it is enough, that it ought to be enough for men. "Let them fight, and endure, and die, and be satisfied, for their battle will help mankind." Well, that sounds very noble, and, indeed, to fulfill it has nobleness. But it was not the way that Jesus left the matter, nor his Apostles. They said that after the battle and the endurance came the peace and the perfection. "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." After the work done, men reaped in themselves the fruit of what they had done. Not only humanity as a whole benefited, but the individual himself. "I have fought the good fight," said St. Paul, "I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." But he did not stop there. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing."

Yes, there is an end to the battle against sin; it is the winning of eternal righteousness. There is an end to the strife against selfishness; it is the life of eternal Love. There is an end to the bitterness of war against evil; it is the eternal securing of peace in goodness. There is an end to trouble, and pain, and sorrow; it is eternal joy in perfection. There is an end to wandering, and homeliness, and solitude; it is an everlasting home with God. There is an end to all decay and death; it is the eternal growth and eternal life which flows to us out of the very Life of God our Father. "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."—*Stopford A. Brooke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

THE BLESSINGS THAT REMAIN.

There are loved ones who are missing
From the fireside and the feast;
There are faces that have vanished;
There are voices that have ceased;

But we know they passed forever
From our mortal grief and pain,
And we thank Thee, O our Father,
For the blessings that remain.

Thanksgiving, oh, thanksgiving,
That their love once blessed us here,
That so long they walked beside us,
Sharing every smile and tear;
For the joy the Past has brought us,
But can never take away,
For the sweet and gracious memories
Growing dearer every day;
For the faith that keeps us patient,
Looking at the things unseen,
Knowing spring shall follow winter
And the earth again be green;
For the hope of that glad meeting
Far from mortal grief and pain;
We thank Thee, O our Father,
For the blessings that remain.

For the love that still is left us,
For the friends that hold us dear,
For the lives that yet may need us
For their guidance and their cheer;
For the work that waits our doing,
For the help we can bestow,
For the care that watches o'er us,
Wheresoe'er our steps may go;
For the simple joys of living,
For the sunshine and the breeze,
For the beauty of the flowers
And the laden orchard trees,
For the night and for the starlight,
For the rainbow and the rain—
Thanksgiving, O our Father,
For the blessings that remain.

—*Annie Johnson Flint,*
in Christian Endeavor World.

I go to prepare a place for you.—*John* xiv. 2.

It is impossible that anything so natural, so necessary, and so universal as death should ever have been designed by Providence as an evil to mankind.—*Dean Swift.*

Prayer is to be considered as an educator of the will, as an avenue through which man claims the aid of the Eternal Goodness in the struggle to be good. It is of no consequence that I get what I want. It is of the utmost consequence that I want what I ought and that I shall be what I ought to be; and the whole purpose of prayer is defeated unless it forwards this result.—*Thomas R. Slicer.*

Every human being has in him the germ of the greatest idea in the universe,—the idea of God; and to unfold this is the end of his existence.—*Slavery.*

One lesson from Christ will carry you higher than years of study under those who are too enlightened to follow this celestial guide.

Our own souls bear witness to the teaching of Christ that it is the "narrow way" of self-denial "which leadeth unto life."—*Self-denial.*

He that endureth to the end shall be saved. —*Matt.* x. 22.

I slept and dreamed that life was Beauty,
I woke and found that life was Duty.
Was thy dream then a shadowy lie?
Toil on, poor heart, unceasingly;
And thou shalt find thy dream to be
A truth and noonday light to thee.

—*E. S. Hooper.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass., offers the following books: "Mother Carey's Chickens," Kate Douglas Wiggin; "Violet: A Fairy Story"; "Pike and Dyke," G. A. Henty; "Won by Waiting," Edna Lyall; "At You-All's House," Baskett; "Our New Mistress," Charlotte Yonge; "A Little Brother to the Bear," Long; "The Transfiguration of Life," James Freeman Clarke; "Self-culture: Physical, Intellectual, Moral and Spiritual," James Freeman Clarke; "The Optimist's Good Morning: Selections for Every Day in the Year"; "Books of the New Testament for Sunday-school Teachers."

The work has grown so it is no longer easy for the Book Club Secretary to care for all that pertains to the Club. The following ladies have volunteered to take charge of the different interests:—

FOR BIBLES, EITHER FOR REQUESTS OR

OFFERS, APPLY TO MRS. LAURA HALLETT, 37 PINCKNEY STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

FOR SCRAPS FOR PATCHWORK, FOR REQUESTS OR FOR OFFERS, TO MRS. E. H. BRIGHAM, 72 WALNUT STREET, BROOKLINE, MASS.

FOR MUSIC, FOR REQUESTS OR OFFERS, TO MRS. THOMAS LACEY, 145 GRAND VIEW AVENUE, WOLLASTON, MASS.

REQUESTS.

1. It has been quite a while since I wrote to you, but I am going to ask for some books, —"The Harvester" and "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," and a book called "Freckles." I should be pleased to receive any or all of them. Should also like pieces of cotton and woollen goods for quilts, as there is so much time when I can only sit in a chair and read or piece quilts. My thanks to each one who has sent reading; and I hope that God will shower his choicest blessings on all *Cheerful Letter* workers. Mrs. Lizzie Town, Buffalo, Kansas, R. D. 2.

2. Mrs. Kate Hill, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, is lonely, and a partial invalid. She asks for reading and a Bible for her mother.

3. We are asked to send reading to Mrs. A. F. Thompson, Oxford, Maine. She has been very sick, and her daughter is just able to sit up.

4. Mrs. G. L. Robberson of Elamsville, Virginia, sends her many thanks to the *Cheerful Letter* for past favors. She would be pleased to be remembered with some post-cards and quilt scraps on her birthday, June 4.

5. Mrs. F. E. Coffman, Decatur, Tennessee, R. 4, the mother of four small children, will be glad of magazines and pictures.

6. My husband has a large circuit, extending into the several districts. We are just home from a four days' trip. We visit the poor and sick and a few well-to-do, distribute literature, read the Scriptures, pray and talk with them; sometimes sleeping on a straw bed in a log house; perhaps the next night in a ten-thousand-dollar house. My husband preaches three times a day sometimes. A week's trip almost puts me on my back. I give you names and addresses of some who are anxious for reading matter: Mrs. Mary E. Matkins (or Watkins), Altamahaw, R. D. 2. Miss Lizzie Brincefield, Altamahaw, R. D. 2. Mrs. Matkins is a widow, and teaches in the rural schools. She has one boy. Miss Brincefield is a rheumatic about fifty years old. She can hobble with a cane. She wants something all the time to read, but must be content with a weekly paper. They are too far to get things from the railroad. If they were sent to me at Glen Raven, North Carolina, by freight, I could distribute them, but think they would enjoy getting them through the mail. I live between two mills and we meet once a week for magazines; but I do not always have them. Mrs. W. F. Galloway, Elon College, North Carolina.

7. I would thank you ever so much for some reading for myself, also a Bible with large print, as my eyes are failing and I never get time to read except at night. (Mrs.) Emma Martin, Shuff, Virginia, R. F. D. 1, Box 80.

8. Myrtle Watson, Whittles, Virginia, writes that she is just twelve years old and lives on a farm one mile from the church where she is anxious to attend Sunday-school this summer. She asks for suitable reading, also pieces for patchwork, and thread, as she is anxious to improve her mind and employ her hands. There are seven younger children in the family.

9. I should like very much to become a member of your correspondence club. I am a twelve-year-old girl and in the seventh grade at school. I am very fond of and should be glad of some reading matter. I greatly enjoy good magazines and story books, picture books of stories for children, etc. I refer you to Rev. W. J. Craddock, Elamsville, Virginia. Dora A. Bryant, Elamsville, Virginia.

10. I should like so much to join the correspondence classes in history, natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. I am trying to get the second grade certificate. Mrs. Annie Hudson has helped me to get my books, and I thought this correspondence class would be a help to me. I should like to hear. Miss Fannie Brammes, Floyd, Virginia, R. 1.

11. Mrs. M. E. Oades, 770 Commercial Street, Portland, Oregon, asks for *Unity*. Mrs. Oades writes: "Doubtless I could obtain copies from Mr. Eliot, our Unitarian minister at the Church of Our Father; but I am not able to walk so far, as we live in the suburbs of Portland. I have been in Portland five years. Several Orthodox ministers have called to see us, but Mr. Eliot has visited us only once during the five years. I used to think if I could only come to Portland and hear Mr. Eliot and his father preach I should be nearer heaven; but this is a common human experience,—nothing is quite what we expected it to be. We are only renters and often move from one part of the city to some

other. But take it all in all I have much to be thankful for. Those of you who have the *Cheerful Letter* would do much good by sending a few copies to Shut-ins. I have for twenty-four years sent my copy to those who are down and out.

"'Now a cheery word can do no harm,
'Twill help them on their way.'

"May God's spirit abide with you wherever you are, wherever you stay is my prayer."

12. Mrs. Ruth Herring, Vulcan, Virginia, asks for any reading.

13. Miss Jennie Raburn, Athens, Tennessee, R. 1, living in a lonely part of the country and almost overburdened, asks for a Bible with large print for her mother, who is seventy-seven. The father is a cripple and cannot work. A brother is not strong and is the greatest care of all; a sister was paralyzed when a baby and has only the mind of a small child, and cannot be left. Jennie would like the *Youth's Companion* for herself and brother. Any suitable reading and pictures will be fully appreciated.

14. I want you all to know how much we appreciated the things you sent us for Christmas. We had a nice tree and all had a good time. I have not been well this winter and I appreciate so much the good reading matter my friends have sent me. I have not been able to go out but little this winter and the reading has given me so much pleasure, and others also, as I pass on all I get. Please do not forget us, and may God bless you all. Any old books for our library will be gratefully received. Mrs. J. Porter, Doerun, Georgia, R. D. 3.

15. Mr. W. H. Thomas, Disputanta, Rock Castle County, Kentucky, is trying to do what good he can in his community and will appreciate good reading. Mr. Thomas *is* receiving *Review of Reviews* and *Current Opinion.*

16. George Ross of Albemarle, North Carolina, writes he is an old soldier eighty-seven years old. He has lost his wife and is very lonely. He asks that we send him letters, cards, and reading. He can see to read some, and his grandchildren read to him.

17. Current numbers of *Popular Science Monthly* will be appreciated by Miss M. Allen, Ferozepose, Punjab, India.

18. Bettie Ann Craig, Stuart, Virginia, R. 5, asks for *Woman's Home Companion.*

19. Miss Lou Sims, Windle, Tennessee, a cripple, would like a large-print Bible, magazines, and calico pieces. She has a very lonely life and well deserves our cheer.

20. Ralph Shearer, a boy of eleven, living at Tellico Plains, Tennessee, "enjoys reading."

21. Mrs. George W. Bean, Oxford, Maine, R. D. 3, asks for "Prince and Pauper" for a small library just started.

22. Arthur B. Via, Stella, Virginia, a lad of eleven, asks for suitable reading. He nearly lost his foot by a mowing machine and is not able to walk much or get to school but little.

23. Mrs. J. R. Coffman, Decatur, Tennessee, would like magazines for her husband, who is an invalid, unable to work for a year at least.

24. I am not able to buy books at present. I have two boys, eight and nine years old. I should be pleased if you would send me Rudyard Kipling's "Jungle Books" and "Just So Stories" for my boy. Also the *Ladies Home Journal* for myself, as my health is not good and I like good reading matter. Address, Mrs. H. C. Bedford, 150 South Broad Street, Mobile, Alabama.

25. Mrs. Nellie Craig, Campbell, North Carolina, R. D. 1, asks for any cheer. She has lately lost her home by fire.

26. Mrs. Ella Hay, Locust Grove, Oklahoma, asks for "Life of Christ" (In asking for the Life of Christ it is best to mention the author, as there are many books by that title) and *Woman's Home Companion.*

27. I should like to have some one send me a New Testament. Good reading will be acceptable; also patchwork scraps. Mrs. John Carter, Athens, Tennessee.

28. Mrs. Annie Anderson, Chatham, Virginia, R. 3, will be very grateful for reading for herself and husband. They are living on a farm, and are both in poor health.

29. I write you to-day to make a request for a small Bible for a very poor girl of twelve years, who is also an orphan. Her mother died when she was quite small, and she is the oldest child of four children. Her father is poor, not able to furnish food and necessary clothing for the family. This is the way by which I found out their circumstances: I have a class in our country Sunday-school, where just a very few people attend. She was in the class last Sunday. I was telling them to commit to memory some verse in the Bible to recite the following Sunday. She spoke out and said, "We haven't any Bible." Then I made inquiry about the family and found out they are in very bad circumstances. So I thought at once of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, as

I knew it was one of their objects to cheer and comfort those in need, and I felt sure you would help me with this request. I have received some good reading myself from *Cheerful Letter* friends and am thankful for all. May God bless all who have sent me reading and the Cheerful Letter Society. While some are helping to cheer and comfort me, I am doing all I can for those nearest me. I have received the April number of the precious little *Cheerful Letter* and enjoy it so much. Would it be asking too much for me to request a large dictionary (unabridged)? I am most desirous of one and shall greatly appreciate it. I should also like to correspond with some of the *Cheerful Letter* friends. I like to get letters and postcards, as I am very lonely and live in the country. Our mail doesn't pass by the house and we have to go almost a mile for it. I wish I could get a letter from some one each day. Miss Bettie Vaughan, Athens, Tennessee, R. D. 1.

30. I got your address from a friend not long ago, telling of the many papers and magazines you have to give away. I am fifty-five years old and have raised ten children, and they have all left me but one. My baby is still with me; she is fifteen years old. I left my old native country Tennessee and have travelled over several States and am now in California near the coast. It rains so much here in the winter that I can't go to church or anywhere else. I haven't had anything to read this winter, and I get very lonesome. My husband, daughter, and I would be very thankful for good reading of any kind, magazines, etc. I will answer all letters. (Mrs.) E. M. McNabb, Grizzly Bluff, California.

31. Mrs. C. W. Pendleton, Elamsville, Virginia, an invalid and lately very ill, would appreciate good reading.

32. I am an orphan boy ten years old. I live with my grandparents and I get very lonesome. Should like to have some one send me some nice books or any good reading. Grandma is piecing me a quilt and I should like some pieces for my quilt. For reference I give J. B. Roberson, Dodson, Virginia. Lester Hall, Elamsville, Virginia.

33. Mrs. Pauline Franck, Unionville, Virginia, R. D. 2, will be very glad of reading.

34. Miss Florine Hooper, McIver, North Carolina, R. D. 1, wants reading, books or magazines. She is a young woman. There are several boys and girls in the family.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Miss Sallie Waller, from Lowesville to Sandidges, Virginia.

Mrs. L. C. Rice, from Moccasin to Ashley, Montana.

Mrs. Joanna Crook, from New London to Norwood, North Carolina, R. F. D. 2.

Mrs. Mattie Francis is now at Tom Bean, Texas, R. D. 1.

Mrs. Minnie Clark is now at Mayodan, North Carolina.

Pauline Franck is now at Unionville, Virginia, R. F. D. 2.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

ENCOURAGEMENT.

(*Continued from last number.*)

A small parlor in the same hotel. Mrs. WARNER *sits by the fire in a comfortable armchair, with a book in her hand. Bright lamp on the table. By the side of the table, in a small chair, sits* ANNA *with a slate in her hands. She is in such a position that the lamp can shine down upon her slate, as she works.*

Mrs. WARNER. It is not quite time for you to begin your lesson yet, Anna. You might play a little while longer.

ANNA. Yes, mother. I know I might; but I thought I would begin writing the words. We are going to write some long words—any long words that we can find in a book. But I don't know how to make all the letters; and it will interrupt you if I ask you to show me, for you are going to read.

Mrs. WARNER. No; it will not interrupt me much, if you manage right. When you want to speak to me, just stand up as usual, and I shall see you, and then when I get to the end of my sentence I will speak to you. In that way, it will not interrupt me at all—at least, not so as to do any harm. Let me see your slate.

ANNA. (*Giving her mother the slate.*) I have not written them very well.

Mrs. WARNER. Why, you have written two of your words already!

ANNA. Yes, mother; I wrote those when I first came home just to see how I could do it.

Mrs. WARNER. You have done it very well indeed.

ANNA. I could not write them plain enough.

Mrs. WARNER. Yes, you have written them very plain indeed, for a person just beginning to write. I know a good many of the letters. That is an i. I know it by the dot; and there's another i, and there's another. Some children, who are careless, forget the dot over some of their i's; but you

have put it over all yours. Then, that last letter is a q.

ANNA. No, mother; that is a g.

Mrs. WARNER. Ah, then the tail of it is wrong. You ought to turn the tail the other way for a g. I ought not to say it is wrong, for it is really right as you have it; that is, it is right for a q, but not for a g. That is a very hard thing to remember—which way to turn the tails of some of the letters; but it will all come to you very soon, if you go on trying carefully, as you do now. That tall letter I suppose is an l, or else a b.

ANNA. It is an l.

Mrs. WARNER. You see it must be made pretty well, for me to know without being told, within one of what it was. And what is the word?

ANNA. Whirligig. I meant it for whirligig.

Mrs. WARNER. Ah, that's a very hard word to write. I should not have thought you could have written such a hard word so well. I could almost read it myself, without your telling me what it was.

ANNA. I mean to try the next word, and see if I cannot write so that you can read it entirely.

(ANNA *sits down, and resumes her work.* Mrs. WARNER *begins to read. In a minute or two* ANNA *stands up.* Mrs. WARNER *goes on reading for a few minutes without appearing to notice her, and then raises her eyes from her book.*)

Mrs. WARNER. Well, Anna!

ANNA. Could you show me, mother, how to make a v—a large V?

Mrs. WARNER. Yes; bring me your slate. (*She takes the pencil and writes,* ANNA *looking over.*) First we make a little sort of a *crinkle* like that; and then we go up a point, so, and then come down by a straight mark—down to the line—so. Now take the pencil, and see if you can do that. (ANNA *takes the pencil and writes.*)

ANNA. There.

Mrs. WARNER. Yes, that's very well. That is the first half of the v. Now comes the last half. You begin at the bottom, and go up again a little way off from the first line, and end in a sort of a curl—so.

ANNA. Yes, mother, now I see. Let me finish mine. (*She takes the pencil, and finishes her own V.*)

Mrs. WARNER. Yes, that is very good. Now sit down and make ten V's, carefully, comparing each one with mine as you make it. By that time you will learn to make them very plain. After you have made ten, look them over, and choose out the best one—the one that you think looks the most like mine, and save that for me to see by-and-by, when you have done your lesson. The rest you can rub out.

ANNA. Yes, mother, that I'll do.

Mrs. WARNER. Is there any other question you think of now, that you wish to ask me before I begin reading again?

ANNA. Only if you would tell me how to spell *locomotive*. We have got to write what we saw coming home from school; and I am going to write that I saw a locomotive, only I don't know how to spell locomotive. If you'll tell me now, I'll write it on the side of my slate; and then I can copy it into my sentence, by-and-by.

Mrs. WARNER Very well; get ready.

ANNA. (*Getting ready to write.*) Now.

Mrs. WARNER. L-o. (ANNA *begins to write the first syllable, and while she is writing it,* Mrs. WARNER *goes on with her reading. She writes slowly and carefully, and when she has finished, she speaks the last letter, to let her mother know that she is ready for the next.*)

ANNA. O.

Mrs. WARNER. C-o.

ANNA. (*After a pause, during which* Mrs. WARNER *continues her reading.*) O.

Mrs. WARNER. M-o.

ANNA. (*As before.*) O.

Mrs. WARNER. T-i-v-e.

ANNA. (*As before.*) E.

Mrs. WARNER. That is all. I can tell you how to spell any word in that way, without any trouble. Indeed, when I see you trying so patiently, and succeeding so well, in learning to write, it is a pleasure to me to help you. I think what a good time I shall have by-and-by in reading the pretty little notes and letters that you will write me. (*She kisses her.* ANNA *looks very much pleased, and resumes her work.*)—*From "Dialogues," by Jacob Abbott.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

WHAT PUSS TAUGHT THE RAILWAY MAN.

A poor stray cat crept into an empty carriage which was standing in a siding on the railway line near a town. Puss was glad to find this dry shelter for her wee kittens when they arrived, where they could lie snugly while she crept out at nights to forage for food. This went on until the kittens were growing strong and then there came a day when the empty vans were required for use, and to pussy's dismay the train began to move as somebody banged to the door.

Three days went by, three dreadful days and nights without food. Nothing for the poor mother, nothing for the little kittens, for how could she when starving herself give

them milk? The fourth day came and then the fifth, till at last her pitiful cries of distress were heard by the men who came to open the door. There she was, so weak that she could hardly stand. Two of her babies were dead, and the other three were hardly able to move.

One of the men brought milk, but the mother stood by, refusing to touch it, till she had carried each of her living kittens to the saucer; she would not drink, though she was wild with thirst, till she had seen them drink.

What a night it was! Big rough men stood around—men who hardly knew what kindness meant. Some of them had not seen home since they were boys, and had almost forgotten what a mother's love could be, and now they stood by and watched that beautiful little picture. It was too much for them, and the sturdy brakemen shed tears. Oh, it was pitiful to see the fond creature, gaunt with famine, forgetting her own terrible need, caring only for her helpless young!

The example of the brakeman was followed by his mates; there was hardly a dry eye among them. They shook hands around the little group and vowed that they would never ill-use an animal as long as they lived. She had taught them a lesson. The fellows had been quarrelsome among themselves, hatred and malice had ruled their lives—now a couple of the men who had not been on speaking terms for months forgave each other and made it up. There was no end to the unkindness which those few tears had washed away; the unselfish deed of a poor animal had melted the ice, and the stony hearts had become hearts of flesh.

When the train reached the nearest station the men handed over the purring mother and her still living kittens to the station master, and they made up a little purse among themselves for their keep. Before starting off again they made a strong appeal to their new friend to treat the little family well, with a promise like that of the Good Samaritan, of further payment for their food when next they came that way. From that hour a feeling of brotherhood prevailed among the little band, and it was all pussy's doings.

One hears many stories of lives being saved by a cat; but in most cases it has not been a premeditated act on the part of our good friend pussy; but the life has been saved through the animal heat given out by her, or by her own instinct and fear.

In the following story I can vouch for the facts, as told me by one who saw them:—

"On the banks of a wide stream stood an old mill which seemed to be fated to destruction by fire, and a cat and her two kittens were in danger of being burnt. Mother Puss was not going to let that happen whilst she had life and strength to prevent it. What should she do? There was safety only on the other side of the stream. Should she and her kittens be burnt to death or should she conquer her dislike to the water? She seized her special pet, for cats generally have one that takes most of the lickings and is a 'spoilt child,' in her mouth, in that clumsy and hair-stirring way which cats have of carrying their little ones, and jumped into the stream. She held her own and the kitten's head above water until she reached the other bank in safety. With a few consoling licks to her favorite she took it to a quiet and sheltered place and returned to the river. Would you believe that she actually swam across to where the old mill was burning still, and fetched kitten No. 2, and again swam the river and placed it in safety by the first? The bystanders cheered her as she crossed the second time, and what was more to pussy's point, they gave her a good saucer of milk and a comfortable place where she could lick herself and kittens dry in quiet and safety.—*Our Four-Footed Friends.*

VISTAS.

There are days when life seems too much for us, we do not know where to turn. The way before us seems a cul-de-sac leading nowhere, and strive against it, as we may, a feeling of despair overtakes us. This feeling may be the result of physical weakness, or left in the wake of a great or overwhelming grief which has changed our lives. It may be necessary for us to lie still and face the situation, since activity and varied interests are out of the question.

Perhaps for a little while it does no harm to let ourselves "slip down to the bottom," and cease to fight against this depression and discouragement, but this self-indulgence must not be for long. We must soon summon up our better, more courageous selves and think what is to be done.

Now is the time for our "vistas." Perhaps we did not realize we had any; but few people are without them when once they know the way to find them. Vistas may be of very different kinds, and some persons of course have more than others. There are many, no doubt, who do not know what "looking through their vistas" means.

They do know, however, how as they drive on woody roads or walk on bricked-in city streets, they come suddenly upon an opening through which they look on quite a different scene. In the city they may catch a glimpse of a park, refreshing to the eye, with its shade trees, or there may be a glimpse of the sea and wharves and masts of vessels outlined against the blue background of the sky.

Sometimes we come upon a little garden gay with crocuses and tulips, hidden away in the heart of the city. These are vistas which bring surprise and enjoyment to the passer-by and often cause him to stop and gaze and forget the thoughts and worries which harassed him.

If we are in the country, the road may be dull and dusty, hemmed in by a low border of *endless* bushes and stunted trees, monotonous and depressing. Suddenly we come to an opening with pasture bars, and hurrying to it we lean upon the topmost rail, and gaze in glad surprise over a beautiful landscape. Far away the eye may roam over fields and woods to the spires of the church, and the cluster of white houses and chimneys of the nearest village; or perhaps we gaze on a chain of hills softened to purple against the sky.

We realize that the feeling of dejection is leaving us, courage revives; after all, the world is not so dull and monotonous, and the beauty was there all the time, only we never suspected it.

We need not, however, be travelling over country roads or city streets to find the vistas; for we must learn to call them up to our mind's eyes at will. Let us lie back and close our eyes and try to do this. Let us call up the scenes which we love most to dwell on in our past lives; they will be vistas called up by memory and the backward look, and they may also be vistas framed in hope, for the coming years. Either way we can gaze through them with love and gratitude, or with hope and anticipation, as the case may be. We shall decide according to our temperaments whether we choose what the past has brought us or what promise of fulfilment lies before us.

If we are nature-lovers, we may prefer to close our eyes and see again beautiful spots visited by us years ago, and still distinctly to be traced on our mental "camera films." They may take us to the mountains, the country, or the sea. We may gaze over the rippling, sparkling seas, watch the summer clouds and shifting sails, and seem to feel again the sea-breezes upon our cheeks. We see the gulls swoop hither and thither, and hear the happy voices of children digging in the sand.

Perhaps our vistas take us to a mountain road, often travelled in the bygone years, and we see the wonderful tangle of trees in autumn glory, the parting of their branches which reveals the mountain peaks softened by the bloom of distance. We hear the babbling of the mountain stream over the pebbles, and feel the keen buoyancy of the mountain air, and hear the sigh of the wind in the tall pines.

Can such happy periods fail to rest and refresh us if we indulge in them? They are ours for all time.

There are many people, however, who do not possess this imaginative faculty. They will choose for their vistas memories of happy days, intimate companionship with old friends half forgotten in which their hearts were light and nothing seemed impossible. Others will recall books or poems they have read which have brought wealth to their lives. Perhaps they send for old letters or diaries and live again the half-forgotten times they so vividly recall.

Other vistas lead onward to opportunities yet to come, dreams of better, happier days, when health and strength is theirs, and they again hold life's possibilities in their grasp. We may remember some half-developed talent and resolve to nourish it, and make it bear fruit in the coming years. There is yet time before us if we make the most of it.

These thoughts bring with them hope and courage, a little glow to the cheek and light in the eye, and we resolve to feel that these quiet hours have not been wholly meaningless or without happiness.

At first the making of these vistas will be an effort, and the end gained will not seem worth while; but it is the first step which counts, and gradually the effort will be less and the results more satisfying, and the habit may be formed of brushing away the tangles, and obscuring thickets in our lives and seeing what lies beyond. A. B. C.

THE DAILY TEST.

One of the things which gives life its interest and its dignity is the fact that no experience stands by itself, but becomes a preparation for that which is to follow. There is a unity and completeness about life on the moral and intellectual sides which gives every act a definite force, and which lends even to trivial things that importance which comes from close and vital relation to the working out of a large and comprehensive scheme. It is a

truism that all life is but a preparation, but it is one of those truisms which very few people appear to believe, or, if they believe, to act upon. A great many men and women live as if each day had no bearing upon its successor, and as if each act were unrelated to the acts that are to follow it. They have read neither history nor their own lives. They have failed to learn the first and most obvious lesson of experience. In every successful career there is clearly revealed the close relation between the culmination in some striking achievement, and the fidelity, patience, and courage which went before it. No man comes suddenly into any kind of supremacy. Every kind of superiority is the result of a thousand apparently unimportant and insignificant acts. The preparation for a great crisis is rarely made consciously. It is generally made by the man or woman who is doing the work of the day with the utmost fidelity, without any idea that that fidelity is to find its reward in the possibility of a notable achievement at the end. The experience of life is so adjusted to the development of character that everything which comes in the shape of opportunity or duty presents a test which there is no possibility of evading. He who meets these tests quietly from day to day, often without the consciousness that they are tests, is making sure preparation for the time when some great test will suddenly be applied, and the quality of the intellectual and moral fibre instantly disclosed. However sceptical men may affect to be, there is no getting away from God in this life. Every day, in every occupation, we are dealing with an invisible power, and the character of our dealing, whether we will or no, is determining the kind of success or the degree of failure that shall come to us. The oft-quoted remark credited to Wellington, that Waterloo was won on the cricket-field at Eton, is only a dramatic way of putting the truth that the great victories are not won on the field where they are finally secured, but in a hundred unregarded preliminary trials of strength. Every day is such a trial.

THE LEAF-CUTTING BEE.

Probably in the spring you have gone to your rose-bushes in the morning and found that some ticket-puncher had just passed down the aisle and unmercifully punched the rose leaves. It is the leaf-cutting bee, an interesting creature whose punch is in her mandibles.

The leaf-cutter is one of the so-called "solitary" bees. She makes her home in a burrow that she cuts in some piece of rotting wood. If you examine one of the burrows you will find that the place is full of thimble-shaped cells, each made of a piece of rose leaf. Within each cell there is an egg and a supply of honey for the larva to live on when it comes to life. The way in which the bee goes to work to prepare this fragrant and luxurious house for its young is most interesting.

After the bee has driven a hole into a wooden post or tree, she seeks out a rosebush and alights on a leaf. She seizes with her legs the part of the leaf she intends to cut and quickly makes a curving slash with her mandibles. Just as the last shred is severed, her wings begin to vibrate, and she flies away, holding her prize firmly beneath her body.

The first pieces she takes are roughly lozenge shaped, and these she pushes and crowds into the tunnel. After she has filled the bit of leaf with pollen and honey, she lays her egg and closes the end of the cell with smaller circular leaf cuttings. The little creature needs at least four circular pieces and seven lozenge-shaped pieces to complete a single cell.

CATERPILLAR HOUSES.

The construction of nests for concealment is not confined to the social caterpillars, but extends to a large number of solitary species. I am inclined to believe the habit universal among the skippers, or lowest family of butterflies. Some of them live in the interior of stems of living plants; others in slight nests formed by weaving together several upright blades of grass; others, and these are generally some of the larger species, like the white-spotted skipper, draw several leaves together just as they grow upon the plant, and retaining them in the desired place by silken bands, live within the leafy bower.—*"Butterflies," by S. H. Scudder.*

I do not doubt that God will hold you with his hand; and, if he lets you stumble, it will only be to show you that, if he did not hold you, you would fall down, and so to make you hold his hand the faster.—*Saint Francis de Sales.*

Never fear but the larger opportunity will make itself, if you take advantage of the smaller one, and do your best in it.—*Jennie C. Croly.*

Truth for authority, not authority for truth.—*Lucretia Mott.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 45 Spring Lane, Canton, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

A FLOWERY ROMANCE.

[Fill in the blank spaces with the names of flowers.]

1.

—— was a bachelor
And led a lonely life;
He thought he'd go a-courting
And find himself a wife.

2.

So he called on —— —— ——
In her humble little cot,
And whispered, "You're a ——";
She said, "—— —— ——."

3.

He kissed her on her red ——,
His heart beat fast and faster;
Said he, "I'll have her for my wife,"
And so he up and ——

4.

"Now when shall we be married?"
She blushed a rosy red.—
Will June, the month of ——, do?"
"Of course it will," he said.

5.

"And gladly on that happy day
My wedding clothes I'll don,
And never in the future sew
My —— —— on."

6.

Their wedding-day dawned fair and bright,
The —— —— shone;
—— —— —— —— tied the knot,
He had his —— —— on.

7.

The bridesmaids in —— dresses
Two beauties,——;
The maid of honor all in white,—
The lovely —— ——

8.

Then they all sat at a banquet
At exactly ——;
The first course was a soup, made
From a —— —— ——.

9.

Then out upon the evening air
All sadness they dispel;
The sexton rings right joyously
A —— ——.

10.

They hurry to the carriage,
The rice comes in a shower;
Away they go as the driver blows
A blast on a —— ——.

11.

"I'd —— —— by thy side,"
Says he, "and never stray;
We always will be happy,
And drive dull ——."

—*Woman's Home Companion.*

II. AN ENDLESS CHAIN.

The first syllable of every word is the second of the preceding word. The first syllable of the first word is the second syllable of the last. All words are dissyllables.

An animal—the tonic—a brief communication—a longer one—fear relating to dew—to assign—a game—a citadel—a disease of rye—obtained delicate—the true skin—naval—pertaining to the kidneys—to frighten—steel covering—human—grease—a poet—not rare. —*Selected.*

III. CONUNDRUMS.

1. What age do we all dread?
2. What age is common to all?
3. What was the age of Esau?
4. What age do kings most enjoy?
5. What is the most deceptive age?
6. What is the best age for a horse?
7. What is the best age for a soldier?
8. Why is the roar of the sea like the noise of cats and dogs? —*Exchange.*

Answers to puzzles in the May number.

I. PROVERB PUZZLE.—1. Folks; 2. Known; 3. Honey; 4. Fight; 5. Offer; 6. Great; 7. Folly; 8. Tells; 9. Grown; 10. Fewer, = Longfellow.

II. SOBRIQUETS.—1. Edward, son of Edward III. 2. Washington Irving. 3. Walt Whitman. 4. The Devil. 5. Alexander Pope.

III. NUMERICAL PUZZLE.—1. Thomas R. Marshall. 2. Roger Wolcott. 3. William G. McAdoo. 4. Charles Sumner. 5. George Dewey.

IV. CONCEALED SHAKESPERIAN CHARACTERS.—Shylock, Portia, Othello, Romeo, Juliet, Hamlet.

V. CHARACTERISTIC INITIALS. 1. William T. Sherman. 2. Ethan Allen. 3. George Peabody. 4. William Shakespeare. 5. Washington Irving.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins, or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

The address of Mrs. Emma M. Backus is now changed to corner Third Avenue and Second Street, St. Petersburg, Florida.

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The Cheerful Letter Exchange offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

Apply to Mrs. Walter G. Leith, 48 Irving Street, Cambridge, Mass.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The regular monthly meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange will be held on Friday, June 2, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. All interested are cordially invited to be present.

The work has grown so it is no longer easy for the Book Club Secretary to care for all that pertains to the Club. The following ladies have volunteered to take charge of the different interests: For Bibles, either for requests or offers, apply to Mrs. Laura Hallett, 37 Pinckney Street, Boston, Mass. For scraps for patchwork, for requests or offers, to Mrs. E. H. Brigham, 72 Walnut Street, Brookline, Mass. For music, for requests or offers, to Mrs. Thomas Lacey, 145 Grand View Avenue, Wollaston, Mass.

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THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

The Chairman, Mrs. George G. Saville, is at the rooms, 25 Beacon Street, on Thursday afternoons, from 2 until 4.30 P.M.

In sending subscriptions for the *Cheerful Letter*, address The Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Subscriptions, 50 cents a year.

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